

May 2024

VERNON CRIME PREVENTION GROUP

Block Watch



May is Bike Theft Awareness Month

Summer brings a 429% increase in bicycle thefts in BC (July, 2023)


VANCOUVER, BC – Warm weather has arrived, and Canadians are breaking out the bicycles. It's no surprise that more bicycles in use means more reported thefts, but Square One found that the number of thefts during the summer months was 429% greater than winter—a tremendous difference.





PREVENTION & DETERENCE

Bikes and especially e-bikes are targeted because they are easy to sell.

Rule number one? Always lock your bike. 

“And don’t cheap out on a \$5 lock,” police said in a statement. “Cheap locks are easily defeated and offer little to no protection. Do some research or better yet, drop into a local bike store and seek out advice on what you need and what you can afford.”

Here are more tips from police to keep your bike from being stolen:

- Don’t just lock a wheel. The frame should always be secured to an immovable object.
- Don’t leave your bike out overnight, even it’s locked, because darkness gives thieves time to find a way to steal it.
- The same thing goes for leaving a locked bike in an isolated area — leave it somewhere where there is lots of foot traffic.
- Take any valuable items like lights with you when you leave your bike.
- Register your bike at project529.com, which is free and can help get a stolen bike back.

Also take a few photos of it, record the make, model & serial number. Key info to prove ownership when/if recovered.

E-Bike Tips

1. Never use only one lock

“The only time I generally only use a single lock is when I’m locking for just a minute or two while I run into a store. Any time I leave my bike for more than a few minutes, I generally use two locks. It’s not that two locks make your bike twice as safe, but it does still improve your chances of not getting stolen for two main reasons: It takes a thief longer to actually do the work, and it means that the thief is more likely to choose a different bike to target that only has one lock”.

2. Take your battery with you so it isn’t stolen

3. Take your entire bike inside

Even better than taking your battery with you is taking your bike with you to prevent it from being stolen. No lock is theft-proof. With the right tools, every single one can be broken or picked, and most both. The best way to not have your bike stolen is to not let thieves have access to it.



4. Don't establish a routine

There are two types of bike thefts: Thefts of opportunity and targeted attacks. The former is where a thief stumbles upon an easy lift and decides to go for it in the moment. The latter is where a thief watches a good target over several days or weeks, then plans the attack method and time for maximum result.

5. Install a tracker on your e-bike. This is a first-person account of someone who had their bike stolen:

“There are plenty of good [GPS trackers](#) out there that can be easily hidden on a bike to prevent it from being stolen. Many are cleverly disguised as bike parts. Even a thief looking for them likely wouldn't recognize where they were hidden.

The only problem with GPS trackers is that they are expensive, and many require monthly subscriptions or a SIM card with its own monthly fee. But now with [Apple AirTags](#) (or the somewhat less effective Tile trackers), it's cheap and easy to put a tracker on your e-bike. It won't work as well as true GPS, but in a crowded city like mine with hundreds of thousands of iPhones walking around creating a network of AirTag locators, it would have been easy to pinpoint my bike.

The kicker is I even had AirTags. I had just bought a four-pack and was even planning on putting one on my bike. I already hid one in my motorcycle and sewed another into my backpack. I just hadn't gotten around to figuring out a good place to hide on my bike yet. If you have an AirTag already, take the time to find a good place for it. They're a bit tricky to hide, but some black duct tape could make it part of the underside of the saddle in a pinch, and many dumb thieves won't take the time to look for it. If you're handy you could probably slice and incision into your saddle, slip it in and then repair the saddle. Many e-bikes [even have a built-in place for AirTags already](#). Juiced's new [e-bike batteries](#) also have an AirTag spot built into the case.

There are even cool AirTag holders for bikes disguised as [bike bells](#) and [bike reflectors](#).

Take the time to put a tracker on your bike. A \$25 tracker is a great investment, especially for an expensive e-bike.”

DID YOU KNOW?

- 1000s of recovered (but unregistered) bikes go to auction in BC annually
- Only 1 in 5 stolen bikes are reported to police



